

JANE WHITAKER TAKES A SLANT AT "HELP WANTED"—HERE'S HOW SHE SIZES IT UP

BY JANE WHITAKER.

Did anyone ever sound to you so absolutely stupid and so foolishly inconsistent that you just longed to shake them?

That was the way I felt while watching the play "Help Wanted."

Not over the little heroine, Gertrude Meyer, because she was such a young girl; and Scott, her employer, such an old roue, that one really had to admire Gertrude that she could take care of herself as well as she did, even thought it wasn't so very well—but her mother—

The story is of a young stenographer—a beginner, who has been trying vainly to secure a position, and finds that no one wants a beginner.

Scott, however, who has advertised for a stenographer, finally selects her at a salary beyond her wildest dreams—\$10 a week—because of her youth and her pretty face, and he is so considerate of the errors she makes, and so sympathetic over the tale of her mother's hard work, and her two little brothers in the orphan asylum, that even a girl with more years tacked on her shoulders might have been a fairly easy victim to his wiles.

And Scott was a past master as a roue. He knew Gertrude only had carfare, so his invitation to luncheon was well timed. He knew, too, how to initiate her at once into the necessity of secrecy when a married employer is making love to his stenographer.

And he knew, too, how to deaden the suspicions that entered her mind after an older and a very wise girl had told her of the game Scott and men of his kind played.

And then—there was mother and Henne and Rudie to think of—and a \$10 a week position, something she could never get again.

Besides—there was Jack, Scott's stepson, with whom she had uncon-

sciously fallen in love.

It was a little overdrawn that a man of Scott's caliber would take his stenographer to lunch every day for a month without having insulted her beyond misunderstanding, for men of that kind do not spend much money before they find out if they will receive its value.

But after she had fought Scott when he caught her in his arms, greed of possession in his eyes and in his voice, and after Jack had broken open the locked door and rescued her from her bestial employer, and she had been discharged and gone home, doesn't it sound a little odd that her mother, who had worked so hard that Gertie might have an education, and sent her little boys to an orphan asylum that every penny might be spent on the girl, would say:

"Now you go no recommend and no job and no nothing. Why did you let him kiss you? Or why didn't you let him kiss you? Or something?"

It sounded odd to me and very stupid, and every moment I was afraid that eGrtie, driven to desperation, might go out and go back to Scott and take the job back on his terms, or something.

And I didn't feel the least bit sympathetic when Mrs. eMyer showed her hands to Gertie, and screamed:

"And me—where do I come in? Eight years since that no good father of your ran away when the little Rudie was born—I slaved for you! I didn't want that you should work in the laundry like me. I gave you a swell education. Mrs. Schmidt was right when she said don't do it, Mrs. Meyer, educations gives them girls stylish notions; but I sent you through business college, didn't I? I made you nice clothes, didn't I? I sent my two little boys to the Orphan Asylum and I gave it all to you. Look at them hands—look! For you!"

I just murmured to the girl beside